



# In Touch South India

**Headlines from the U.S. Consulate General Chennai**

**January-February, 2005**

**Volume: II, Issue:1**

**<http://chennai.usconsulate.gov>**

## **Get in Touch**

### **Main Web link:**

<http://chennai.usconsulate.gov>

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<http://americanlibrary.in.library.net>

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<http://buyusa.gov/india>

### **Consulate Phone Number:**

044-2811-2000

### **Consulate Fax Number:**

044-2811-2020

## **Editor's Note:**

Beginning in 2005, every issue of In Touch will concentrate on a specific theme. We'd already chosen community service as our theme when the tsunami struck. The outpouring of public service that followed has truly been inspirational.

In 2005 we will strive to make In Touch more interactive. I encourage you to contact us with ideas and reactions. I ask also that you take the CG's offer to heart: Let us know about your organization and/or community. May be we can arrange a visit, and deliver the next In Touch in person.

Happy New Year!

Christopher Wurst

Vice Consul for Public Affairs

## **Days to Remember**

January 19 - Martin Luther King's Birthday

January 30 - Franklin Delano Roosevelt : Birth Anniversary

February 1-28  
National African American History Month

February 12 - Abraham Lincoln : Birth Anniversary

February 16 - President's Day

February 22 - George Washington: Birth Anniversary

## **Greetings!**

We are South India's Consulate. We shared with you the sadness and grief as friends and communities suffered when the Tsunami struck. We have been active in the aftermath as well, supporting and mediating both U.S. government assistance to NGOs through the U.S. Agency for International Development, and through our personal contributions. Despite the tragedy, I have been impressed and gratified by the way so many, from all backgrounds and walks of life, have risen to this challenge. It has been a time of great sorrow, but this humanitarian response has been admirable.



Despite being located in Chennai, we try to reach out to everywhere in our consular district. Many of us travel every week and often nearly every day! There are some things, like visas, where we need for you to come to the consulate because that is the only place we have the machines and infrastructure to serve you. For many other things, we are happy to come to you. We send people to talk to students and commercial groups, American wardens and U.S. business persons. We frequently call on local government leaders, to discuss their plans for the future. If you have a message you would like us to hear, or would like to have one of our representatives visit, please contact us in writing and ask. We have much to learn from you and look forward to the opportunity.

Richard D. Haynes  
Consul General of the United States of America

Contact Mr. Haynes, at:  
<mailto:chennaiintouch@state.gov>

## **Tsunami tragedy brings out best in Consulate Community**

It's impossible to understate the scope of the tsunami tragedy. But the devastating event has been met worldwide with compassion and conviction. The reaction within Consulate Chennai is a small

snapshot that captures this spirit.

Almost from the first moment that the TV news reported the massive earthquake, the Consulate went into action. Members of the Consular Section were the "first responders" (see Q&A, page 4); they immediately began working the phones to verify the status of American citizens in affected region. In the coming days, as the death tolls mounted, calls from worried Americans in the U.S. increased. Indian and American staff-from all sections-began volunteering, working 24 hours a day, through weekends and the New Year holiday, giving immediate responses to concerned callers. Likewise, the Information Management Section worked 24 hour days, keeping the operator's booth and extra lines running for over week after the tsunami. The Public Affairs Section sent out hourly press updates from which the scope of the story began to really sink in. No section in the Consulate was unaffected.

Despite these long hours, the Consulate community pitched in to help others immediately, small teams-including spouses and children-went to a local NGO to help pack emergency aid kits. The Community Liaison Office (CLO) helped a contract employee who was rendered homeless, collecting money and a large amount of donated goods. CLO has also



Mr. Selvaraj from the AIRC, help pack emergency clothing for tsunami victims

been active collecting money and goods for victims in Nagappattinam, the worst-affected area in south India. A Consulate staff member plans to deliver these items personally.

The response to the tsunami, the spirit shown by people in its aftermath has been extremely gratifying-here at the Consulate, throughout India, in the U.S., worldwide.

## Corporation for National and Community Service FY 2004 Performance and Accountability Report - Part 1

Corporation for National and Community Service. November 24, 2004.

[Note: The Corporation for National and Community Service provides opportunities for Americans of all ages and backgrounds to serve their communities and country through three programs: Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and Learn and Serve America. Members and volunteers serve with national and community nonprofit organizations, faith-based groups, schools, and local agencies to help meet community needs in education, the environment, public safety, homeland security, and other critical areas. The Corporation is part of USA Freedom Corps, a White House initiative to foster a culture of citizenship, service, and responsibility.]

In the United States, volunteer and citizen service organizations often cross traditional boundaries between governmental and nongovernmental entities, between paid and completely volunteer staffing arrangements, and sometimes include corporate sponsorship and/or close relationships with religious organizations. This report provides a good overview of how the Corporation for National and Community Service bridges all of these categories in its relationship with the gamut of civic institutions. The programs fostered by the Corporation are designed to assist volunteers as well as the beneficiaries of their services, so this report addresses the benefits that accrue to both parties in volunteer activities.

Among the activities highlighted in the report are the following:

\* The Corporation provided grants to 96 local non-profit organizations in 38 states and the District of Columbia to help mobilize volunteers on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day on January 18, 2004. These volunteers helped build homes, paint schools, plant trees, clean parks, visit seniors, collect items for homeless shelters, and install smoke detectors.

\* The AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC) engaged 1,187 members on 575 projects in all 50 states, tutoring and mentoring 25,000 children and youth, constructing or repairing 500 low-income homes, and building or restoring 550 miles of trails in national parks.

\* In 2004, the Foster Grandparents Program served more than 263,000 children with special and exceptional needs.

For full text of the document, access:

[http://www.nationalservice.org/pdf/about/reports/par2004\\_01.pdf](http://www.nationalservice.org/pdf/about/reports/par2004_01.pdf) [pdf format, 88 pages] or  
[http://www.cns.gov/pdf/about/reports/par2004\\_01.pdf](http://www.cns.gov/pdf/about/reports/par2004_01.pdf)

## Corporate Involvement in Community Economic Development : The Role of U.S. Business Education

By Donna J Wood et al. Business and Society, June 2002, pp.208-241.

This article reports a study of how leading U.S. business schools incorporate one important dimension of corporate citizenship-corporate involvement in communityeconomic development (CI/CED)-in their curricula and programs. Corporatecitizenship, or social responsibility, is shown to have several important and unexpected locations in business education. In addition, the authors develop a rationale for why and how specific topics such as CI/CED as well as the general topic of corporate citizenship are appropriate for business school attention.

—Copies of this article are available by request.

## New at the American Information Resource Center (AIRC)

### Books

Aldrich, Clark. **Simulations and the Future of Learning: An Innovative (and Perhaps Revolutionary) Approach to e-Learning** / Clark Aldrich. San Francisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2004 (371.334 ALD)

Bok, Derek. **Universities in the Marketplace: The Commercialization of Higher Education** / Derek Bok. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003 (338.43378 BOK)

Guttmann, Robert. **Cybercash: The Coming Era of Electronic**

**Money** / Robert Guttmann. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003 (332.1 GUT)

Lane, Frederick S. **The Naked Employee: How Technology is Compromising Workplace Privacy** / Frederick S. Lane. New York, NY: AMACOM, 2003 (331.01 LAN)

McKenzie, Richard B. **Digital Economics: How Information Technology Has Transformed Business Thinking** / Richard B. McKenzie. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2003 (338.5 MCK)

Odom, William E. **Fixing Intelligence: For a More Secure America** / William E. Odom. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003 (355.3432 ODO)

Warschauer, Mark. **Technology and Social Inclusion: Rethinking the Digital Divide** / Mark Warschauer. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2003 (303.4833 WAR)

### So long, Secretary Powell....

*"During your leadership FSNs experienced being part of 'One Team & One Mission'. FSNs worldwide will miss you."*

*—Anjana Chatterjee  
Chennai, India*

*Excerpted from the final "Memory Book" that was sent to Secretary Powell, with messages from FSN around the world, who attended the FSN conferences in Washington. He received the book before he started his travels*

## Articles

### **AMERICAN NATIONAL GOVERNMENT: AN OVERVIEW**

By Frederick M. Kaiser. Congressional Research Service, May 20, 2003. 6 p.

### **BUILDING KNOWLEDGE FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING - THE PROMISE OF SCHOLARSHIP IN A NETWORKED ENVIRONMENT**

By Thomas Hatch, Randy Bass & Toru Ilyoshi. Change, September/October 2004, pp. 42-49.

### **EDUCATING ENTREPRENEURSHIP STUDENTS ABOUT EMOTION AND LEARNING FROM FAILURE**

By Dean A. Shepherd. Academy of Management Learning & Education, September 2004, pp. 274-287.

### **HEARTBEAT POETRY**

By Nicole Garbarini. Scientific American, October 2004, pp. 30-32

### **WHY DEMOCRACIES EXCEL**

By Joseph T. Siegle, Michael M. Weinstein & Morton H. Halperin. Foreign Affairs, September/October 2004, pp. 57-61.

An update on the American Information Resource Center

### **New Fee Structure:**

Beginning January 3, 2005 following will be the new fee structure for memberships at the AIRC.

	<b>One Year</b>	<b>Two Years</b>
<b>Individual</b>		
<b>(Local and Mail Service):</b>	<b>Rs. 200/-</b>	<b>Rs. 700/-</b>
<b>Institutional</b>		
<b>(Local and Mail Service):</b>		
<b>Non-Profit Institutions</b>	<b>Rs. 2000/-</b>	<b>Rs. 3000/-</b>
<b>Profit Institutions</b>	<b>Rs. 4000/-</b>	<b>Rs. 7000/-</b>

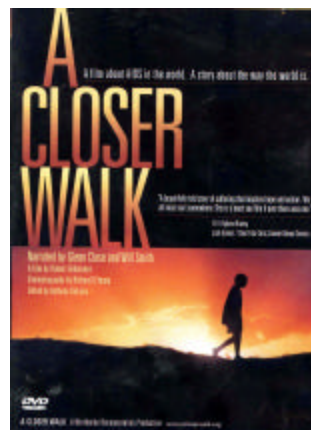
We are enriching our collection with major additions in the fields of Computer Science, Business & Management, and American Fiction and establishing an English as a Second Language collection of books, CD-ROMs, DVDs and Videos.

We appreciate your continued patronage and look forward to being of service to you in the future.

## **A CLOSER WALK**

Chennai's Public Affairs Section (PAS) has been screening the film 'A Closer Walk' throughout southern India.

'A Closer Walk' is the first film to depict humankind's confrontation with the global AIDS epidemic. The film's director and producer, Robert Bilheimer, an Academy Award nominee, has allowed us to screen this film-which used Chennai as a principal shooting location-as widely as possible. 'A Closer Walk' was conceived with the late Jonathan Mann, architect of the World Health Organization's response to global AIDS. A



Worldwide Documentaries production, A Closer Walk has been produced in association with the Global Health Council.

Subjects and story lines encompass the broad spectrum of the global AIDS experience and include people with HIV/AIDS from all walks of life; AIDS children and orphans and those caring for them; doctors, nurses, and social workers; human rights advocates; and prominent scientists, economists,

researchers, government leaders, and NGO officials. The film's basic themes remain the underlying causes of AIDS; the relationship between health, dignity, and human rights; and the universal need for action, compassion, and commitment to counter what has become the worst plague in human history. Several universally recognized individuals whose participation in the film will broaden its appeal and add substance to its message have been interviewed in the last six months. These include: His Holiness the Dalai Lama, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, and Bono of U2. The interview with His Holiness was His first on the subject of "universal responsibility" in the context of the global AIDS epidemic.

So far, PAS Chennai has screened the film for over 1000 Indians, in two different states. If you have a large group who would be interested in viewing this amazing documentary, please let us know!

[mailto: chennaiintouch@state.gov](mailto:chennaiintouch@state.gov)

## **WELL-KNOWN KERALA POET ATTENDS PRESTIGIOUS U.S. WRITING PROGRAM**

**T.P. Rajeevan, a well-established Malayalam writer, recently returned from a three month residency at the prestigious International Writing program at the University of Iowa. Mr. Rajeevan was successfully nominated by PAS Chennai to receive an International Visitor grant. He was the first such participant from Kerala. Besides rubbing elbows with established writers from all over the world, Mr. Rajeevan met with U.S. Congressmen, and toured writing colonies in Washington, New York City, and New Mexico. "The participation has been immensely useful to me...as a writer, publisher and university relations professional," said the writer. "I could meet many excellent writers from various parts of the world and exchange ideas. This has widened the horizon of my understanding of contemporary world literature." Mr. Rajeevan writes biweekly columns in The New Indian Express and The Hindu.**



## Q & A WITH GIGI CORRAL FROM AMERICAN CITIZEN SERVICES

CW: GiGi, I'm guessing that in the weeks following the tsunami tragedy, the American Citizen Services (ACS) unit has been as busy as it's ever been; am I right?

GC: Absolutely. My first thought was how many Americans were there on the coast and are they safe. Many people in the U.S. had the same thought. The Consulate and the State Department in Washington received over 1000 welfare and whereabouts reports. Within hours we had two dozen staff in the office, functioning 24/7. The ACS Unit recruited staff from throughout the Consulate to follow local leads and enter volumes of information into a welfare and whereabouts database. We've gone from over 1,000 open cases to less than 50. People gave up their weekends, their New Year holidays, and one officer literally put in a 28-hour shift!

CW: Had you planned on something like this?

GC: Actually we are set up to handle emergencies small and large. The scale of this was bigger than anything we've ever seen, but that's why we work so hard to always be prepared and why we encourage all Americans to register their overseas travel with the State Department's website.

CW: ...So you can locate them in an emergency?

GC: Exactly. This crisis taught us many things, none more than how important it is for residents and visitors to register with the Consulate. In the event of a disaster-natural or otherwise-that is our first reference point in locating Americans. It's very easy and can be done online. (Ed-Options for both short- and long-term visitors can be found at: <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/> ).

CW: It seems like ACS comes to mind when people are in trouble of one kind or another; are most of your services emergency-based?

GC: Not at all. There really isn't a list, per se, of services that we provide. New situations continually present themselves that give us another opportunity to be of service to the American community. Generally, however, we provide a wide-range of services for American citizens. Americans living here use our office every day to request physician or lawyers lists, register to vote, pick up tax forms, collect social security benefits, register for selective service, register the birth of U.S. citizen children abroad, and, of course, to renew or replace their U.S. Passport. We assist family members when the death of an American occurs in our district and can provide some assistance to destitute Americans so that they can return home.

We are the only U.S.-recognized notaries in south India. Again, I refer you to our website, which has detailed information about our general services, hours and fees.

<http://chennai.usconsulate.gov/wwwhacs.html>

CW: I wanted to ask you about passports. If my passport was lost or stolen, what would I need to do to get it replaced?

GC: You should immediately report the loss or theft to the Indian police. You'll need the police report to get the new passport and an exit visa from the Indian government. Bring in proof of identity and citizenship. I would also urge people to travel with at least one photocopy of their passport. Then you just need to fill out the application form and pay the \$85 fee (\$70 if you're under 16). The passport will arrive in about 2-3 weeks.

CW: Full service! But it's my impression that ACS really shines in an emergency; would you say this is true?

GC: We'd be happy not to have that opportunity to shine but we are set up to handle emergencies. We maintain a Warden System with volunteer American citizens in different zones throughout south India. Upon registering, American Citizens are assigned to a specific warden zone.

Wardens disseminate information to otherwise isolated American citizens. When the tsunami struck, our wardens were among our very first phone calls. In a very short period of time, we had comprehensive reports from our wardens, not only verifying the safety of the American citizens in their zones but apprising us of the situation in each of those areas.

CW: But what if I'm the victim of crime?

GC: If your money has been lost or stolen, the Consulate can assist you in obtaining funds from friends or relatives in the U.S. However, crimes committed in India are within the jurisdiction of Indian authorities; we can't help you from a legal standpoint, except to provide you with a list of attorneys, as I mentioned before. Thankfully crime isn't a huge issue here, although it does occur here, like anywhere else.

CW: When will you be able to breathe a sigh of relief?

GC: When every single American has been accounted for. But even then, we'll be honing our system to respond even more efficiently should we be needed.



Ms. Gigi Corral, Chief of American Citizen Services, American Consulate General Chennai interviewed by DPAO Chirstopher Wurst (also seen is Ms. Swapna John, American Citizen Services).